Divine Meditations

On the following

SUBJECTS,

VIZ.

The TOMBS in *Westminster-Abbey*,
The CHRISTIAN'S FELICITY.
The JOYS of ETERNITY.

Printed in the SPECTATOR, in the Year 1715.

To which is added,

A MEDITATION on the Works of the CREATION, never before Printed.

By the Author of the *Description of the* FOUR LAST THINGS.

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THE SPECTATOR.

Nº 16. *Friday, February* 25. 1715.

Quis talia fando
Myrmidonum, Dolopumve, aut dura Milite Ulysſei,
Temperet a Lacrymis? VIRG.

WAlking by my ſelf in *Weſtminſter-Abbey*, and viewing the venerable Antiquity of the Building, and that awful Pomp which dreadfully beſets its Tombs and Monuments, I fell into the following Meditation

How ſeeling a Lecture, do theſe ſilent, but ſtriking Spectacles of Mortality, read to a thinking and reflecting Mind! more moving than all the Arguments, Paſſion and Solemnity of a Funeral Oration; or the moſt mournful Periods, and pathetick Accents of any living Monitor. Not all the Tears of weeping Relatives, not all the Rhetorick of Commanding Pens, have half the Power to affect and move as this awful Silence! And are theſe the utmoſt Bounds and Boaſts of earthly Grandeur? Are Crowns and Scepters,

and Imperial Sways, come at length to this? Are these the mighty and aspiring Monarchs, whose greedy Arms would grasp the universal Orb, that here lie cover'd in a Span of Earth, and mingled with the Dust from whence they sprang? What famous and convincing Instances are these, of the Poverty of this sublunary [illegible], and the fleeting Vanity of unimmortal Joys! What can possibly be pretended, which comes up to the Dignity of the *Intellectual Being*, the Limits of whose Capacities are so vast, and whose Duration runs parallel with Eternity! How thick a Cloud of dark Oblivion will vail at last the brightest Sun of mortal Glory! Thanks to a Redeemer! There's nothing, amidst all these Triumphs of Death, and solemn Instances of Mortality, that can give me the least Disturbance or Surprize. This gloomy Building, and its yet gloomier Scenes, can't expel those delightsome Rays which beam from the Face of my glorified Saviour! How joyfully could I now take my Flight out of this mouldring Fabrick, to those heavenly Mansions that are always new! When I see the Footsteps of devouring Time upon the Walls of this ancient Cathedral; how I exult to think I have a Building, whose Architect is God, eternal in the Heavens! While I tread among these Tombs, methinks I tread upon the Confines of blessed Immortality! How thin a Vail now seems between me and the invisible State, how short a Remove from Heaven! that oh! methinks I could even grasp the Crown of Glory in my Arms, and set my Foot upon the Pavement of the *Celestial Paradise!* what Honours, what Hallelujahs are due to a Redeeming Saviour! how glorious and surprizing are the triumphant Conquests of his Cross! which enables such a silly Worm as I, to insult the Darkness of the Graves, and to welcome, with the gladdest Airs, what's horrid, strange, and terrible to Nature! And whilst I am surrounded with these glittering Tombs, and contemplating these illustrious Ensigns, that are hung up to perpetuate the Memory of frail Mortals; immortal Saviour! divine and glorious Love! what eternal Monument of Celestial Honours, shall I rear to thine adored Memory? Could I erect a Pillar of Brass or Mar-

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ble to the Clouds, and with a Pen of Adamant, carve my Redeemer's Name, and his wondrous Acts from the top to the bottom, how dumb and lifeleſs a Story would that be of his infinite Perfections! how brittle a Memorial of his immortal Deeds! how ſlender a Tribute for his matchleſs Love! how unſuitable to the Nature of his Atchievements, and the Largeneſs of his deſerved Fame! ſuch imperiſhable Monuments ſhould alone wear the Inſcriptions of a Redeemer's Praiſe, as will outlive the Foundation of the World, and endure to eternal Ages! how then, thou dear and adored Saviour, who inhabiteſt the Praiſes of Eternity! *hoſanna'd* by Legions of *warbling Cherubims!* encompaſs'd with immortal Light, and enthron'd with infinite Glory! how ſhall I attempt to celebrate thine amazing Love, and tell the intellectual World the glorious Wonders of Redeeming Goodneſs I have nothing that I can offer but my ſelf, who am thine ten Thouſand times already, my Soul, which thou haſt won with infinite Endearments. O inſpire her with heavenly Wiſdom, and enrich her with the Treaſures of Divine Knowledge. Ennoble her with thy bleſt Reſemblance, and indelibly engrave on her thy Righteous Law. Lead captive her capacious and immortal Powers, poſſeſs all her Faculties, and engroſs her Love. Irradiate her with larger Manifeſtations of thy Glory, endow her with richer Effuſions of thy Grace, that ſhe may reflect thine Honour with a brighter Blaze. Then ſhall ſhe recount and ſing the Wonders of thy bleeding Love, reflect the Glories of thy Mercy, and bear the Enſigns of thy Victorious Power, amidſt Thouſands and Millions of wondring Seraphims, when all theſe fenc'd and guarded Splendors, brazen Pillars, and marble Tombs, ſhall be blended with common Duſt. Oh! that my Soul could wing away from this ſinful and this tranſitory State, and flee to yon *Celeſtial Regions!* the Place of her happy and immortal Birth! where ſhe ſhall live the Life, and learn the Rhapſodies, and wear the Perfections of Angels, and bear them Company in their loftieſt Praiſes, profoundeſt Searches and nobleſt Flights, and bathe her then glorified Faculties in the Joys of Beatifick

tifick Vision! How wide and foreign are the common Conceptions of true Happiness! how besides themselves the Gallants of the Age! that they can relish no Sweetness in the Fountain of Pleasure, apprehend no Charms in infinite Beauty, nor Honour, in Resemblance of their Maker! no Glory, no Greatness, in trampling on all the Splendors of a glittering World; no Happiness or Delight in walking upon the Confines of immortal Bliss! Is it not pleasant to be at Peace with our Creator, and be in due Subjection to the supreme Being? Is it not pleasant to throw away the Weapons of Rebellion, and run into the Arms of divine Forgiveness? Is it not pleasant to behold an incensed Judge, chang'd into a friendly Advocate, and that eternal Throne, which sent forth nothing but Thunderings and Lightenings, Terrors and vindictive Wraths, calm'd with the Voice of the stupendous Sacrifice? What solid Satisfaction, profound Contentment, and seraphick Joy, is the natural and necessary Consequence of a pardon'd State, and Hopes of Glory. And whereas I find in me a secret Consciousness to a future Immortality, and irresistable Dictates that I must shortly be consign'd to everlasting Bliss or everlasting Woe; is it not pleasant, unutterably pleasant, to have that grand Affair determin'd well in my own Bosom, and to possess the Pledges, and enjoy the Foretastes of an happy and eternal Life? And is this the Way? Is this the State, the Life, unhappy Youth so fondly censures? Is this indeed that serious Piety, for which they frame so strange an Image, and place in such harsh and disagreeable Lights?

And is it so wonderful entertaining to the thinking Mind, to reflect upon the different Ages, which here present themselves in this solemn Prospect, and to recount the vast Variety of Travellers, the numerous Stages and Passages of Life, brought on at length to one common Period? Is the reasonable Nature, delightfully taken up in musing on such small Antiquities as these, and looking back upon the Course of a few hundred Years; what culminating Joys, and uncontain'd Delight, will overflow beatifick Minds above, when they shall survey the Records of Eternity, and in those date-

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leſs Ages, ſhall find their Names enroll'd in the heavenly Regiſter, in Characters never to be effac'd! When the Ancient of Days ſhall unclaſp the Book of the Divine Decrees, unlock the Treaſures of his Council, and unfold the Myſteries of his eternal Love, and ſhew to every happy Soul, what room they had in his Heart and Thoughts, Myriads of Ages before he created them! What Eagle Wing of Human Thought; what higher Soar of Mind angelick, can look into that amazing Conduct, and fully tell its glorious Origin! From this eternal Spring proceed thoſe Streams, which ſwell the Ocean, and o'erflow the Banks of the Redeemed's Bliſs; and as often as they reflect on the wondrous Happineſs and glorious Joys with which they are ſurrounded, they muſt riſe in their adoring Thought, to the ſovereign and eternal Love, as the firſt Link in the golden Chain, and very Source of all their Bleſſedneſs! happy Creatures! 'Twas for you that this ſtately Frame of Nature was erected; and thoſe Heavens beſpangled with ſuch glorious Orbs! 'Twas for you that this goodly Structure of the World was form'd out of undigeſted Chaos, as a Stage or Theatre, whereon to tranſact the vaſt and important Concerns, that relate to your eternal Happineſs, till by the various Methods of Grace and Providence, you are train'd for an immortal State, and made ripe and ready for ſupernal Bliſs. And as much as good Men are now mock'd and banter'd by an impious World; 'tis for their ſakes the Sun ſtill ſhines in yon Celeſtial Sphere; and thoſe innumerable Stars ſtill rowl in ſuch beautiful Order. 'Tis they that uphold the tottering Pillars of the Univerſe, and reprieve it from its final Overthrow and great Cataſtrophe! They are the *Lots* and *Abrahams* that keep off its diſſolving Flames. When their Number is accompliſh'd, and their Work is done, the Almighty Creator will, as it were, ſay, "What have I any more to do with that World below: "My choſen Jewels are all of them gather'd out of the "Ruins of the great Apoſtacy: The Councils and Purpoſes of my Grace and Wiſdom are now finiſh'd: I'll "lay aſide the Scepter of Mercy, and put on the Severity of a Judge, and turn the Throne of Grace into a

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"ſtrict Tribunal. I'll ariſe to the Vindication of mine "Honour, the Confuſion of my implacable Adverſa- "ries, and avenge the Quarrel of my Covenant. The "World grows old in Corruption, and calls for purify- "ing Flames: All the Creatures groan to be deliver'd "into the Liberty of my Children: The Spirits of my "Saints long for Re-union with the Bodies, and to "Re-embrace the dear Companion of their Bliſs. The "Cries of the Souls under the Altar, How long, Lord, "Holy and True, are ever ſounding in mine Ears; "Sun, ſtop thy Progreſs, veil, and be extinct for ever; "Let the Moon withdraw her ſhining, darken and diſ- "ſolve into Blood. Ye Stars, relinquiſh your Spheres, "and fire univerſal Nature; let the Foundations of "the Earth be looſed, and the Heavens be folded to- "gether; let the Throne be ſet, and the Books be o- "pened: Attend, all ye Angels, the ſolemn Pomp of "my dread Tribunal; *Gabriel*, aſſume the Trump, and "ſound the General Alarm. Ariſe, ye Dead, awake "O World, awake! and come to Judgment.

And that piercing Trumpet, that ſhall rouze the Duſt of Kings and Princes, and ſhatter all in pieces thoſe Regal Monuments and Magnificent Tombs; when thou ſhalt ſee the Battlements of Heaven on a light Flame, and the Air crowded with dazling Cherubims and bright Attendants, the glorious Train of a Deſcending Judge! When thou ſhalt hear the great and univerſal Groan of diſſolving Nature; and ſee all the noble and beautiful Furniture of this ſpacious and ſtately Theatre periſh in the mighty Conflagration! When Hell ſhall yield up her Apoſtate Legions to their Doom, and the Seas and the Graves pour in upon the boundleſs Plain! When the united Shrieks of Deſpairing Worlds ſhall burſt the Skies, and rend the Bowels of the Earth; 'twill be all to thee, my Soul, but the joyful Signal, that that fair immortal Morn is come, in which this Body ſhall gloriouſly riſe, and be reaſſum'd to thy compleat Beatitude!

Friday,

N° 33. *Friday, April* 29. 1715.

——— Then wilt thou be loath
To leave this Paradiſe, but ſhalt poſſeſs
A Paradiſe within thee, Happier far!

MILTON.

IF the Chriſtian's Proſpects of Felicity and Joy, were bounded in the Limits of the preſent Life, even St. *Paul* had judg'd him to be the moſt Unhappy of Human Race. But amidſt ſuch bliſsful Circumſtances and glorious Hopes, he is plac'd by the Divine Grace, that none can advance ſuch juſt Pretenſions to every thing that is truly Great and Bleſſed, as the real Chriſtian.

As for Honour, his Extraction is Divine, Heaven is his Native Home, and he is born to a glorious Immortality! The infinite, eternal, incomprehenſible JEHOVAH, is his gracious and indulgent Father, and JESUS, the Prince of the Kings of the Earth, is his elder Brother! All the bleſſed Inhabitants of the Celeſtial Palaces, thoſe ſpotleſs and immortal Beings, are but part of the Train of his ſpiritual Kindred. Cherubims and Seraphims, thoſe Angelick Creatures, thoſe pure and everlaſting Flames of Love, ſhall hereafter be his bright and noble Companions, as they are now his conſtant glorious, though inviſible Guardians.

As by a ſtupendous Condeſcention, and in an ineffable Manner, he is ſo intimately related to the glorious MAJESTY of Heaven and Earth, the firſt Fountain and Sovereign of all Things, the Univerſe is his, in her beſt Attire, and nobleſt Product. That ſtately Firmament, that magnificent Canopy of Heaven, adorn'd with ſo many lovely ſhining Lights and beautiful Planets,

nets, does but floor that Celestial Dwelling, which is prepared for his happy and eternal Abode! He considers the incomprehensible Glory of his Creator, his infinite Excellencies and Perfections, as his own proper Portion; triumphs and luxuriates at that rich Felicity, that stable overflowing Satisfaction, which he sees eternally abounding in the Divine Nature; he views all his blessed and glorious Attributes, combining to furnish out his consummate and everlasting Beatitude, and beholds with Rapture, in his boundless Essence, an Infiniteness to answer all the noblest Pantings of his Soul, and to fill up the utmost Grasp of his vast and immortal Capacities!

His Comforts are solid and refin'd; his Pleasures are unmixed, Rational, Divine, Sincere and Everlasting; becoming the Dignity, and suited to the Nature of a Reasonable Spirit. His secret Transports and Elevations of his Soul, proceed from the Prospect and delicious Foretastes of an approaching Heaven; and just are his most exalted Joys, when he knows what he finds in Converse with his Redeemer here, is as nothing to the the actual and compleat Fruition of him, in an eternal Hereafter. He sees such a Confluence of attractive Excellencies, all possible Beauty and Perfection, shining with eternal uncreated Sweetness in that infinite Original, that his heavenly Mind becomes dead to these inferior Charms, and all the doubtful Glimmerings of created Splendors, vanish before that glorious Sun!

He stands ready and prepar'd for all the various Scenes of this mutable and mortal Life, and regales with divine Repast, whilst he sees himself in the Embraces of that State, in which all Things have a Command to forward his eternal Happiness. Every Taunt, and Insult, and unjust Reproach, puts a Jewel in his Crown! Every conflict with his spiritual Adversaries, is a Spoil, to heighten his Victory and enhance his Triumphs! If he is plung'd in a Sea of deepest Calamity, and cover'd with the thickest Shades of Affliction, he knows they can be but of a short Continuance, and must flee before the Day of eternal Glory! If he enjoys all the agreeable Entertainments of Life, and the constant Smiles of a recon-

reconciled Deity, he conſiders it but as a Drop, to that immenſe Ocean of boundleſs Joy, that Sea of Light and Life, and Love, where he ſhall ſweetly bathe to all Eternity. No Events of Providence, no Revolutions in the World, or Prodigies in Nature, can at all daſh his Comforts, or ſhake the Baſis of his eternal Hope. Should the Sun be, not only *totally eclips'd*, but utterly extinguiſh'd, and an univerſal Darkneſs prevail, not to be expell'd, but by the Splendor of Chriſt's ſecond Appearing, his Proſpects would remain unclouded, lying far beyond the Reach of this Mortal State. If he is loaded with Diſgrace, and treated with the utmoſt Contempt, and has a Thouſand Indignities and poinant Reflections thrown upon him by his Fellow-Creatures, he knows they ſhall one Day be wip'd off by an Almighty Hand, in the Face of the Univerſal World. He ſmiles at the Thoughts, and with Joy anticipates the ſolemn Tranſactions of that Day; and meditates, without Terror, yea, with pleaſing Tranſport, the unſpeakably awful and majeſtick Brightneſs and Glory of that enlightened Tribunal!

And at Death, his precious and immortal *Soul*, incomparably the nobleſt Part of his Conſtitution, ſhall be receiv'd and convey'd, by an heavenly Band of Guardian Angels, to the Paradiſe of eternal Bliſs, where ſhe ſhall be cloathed with high and angelical Endowments, enrich'd with the moſt admirable and exalted Abilities, her created Nature is ſuſceptible of! She ſhall be illuminated and raviſh'd with the largeſt Comprehenſion of both natural and divine *Knowledge*, and how illiterate, contemptible and inglorious ſoever ſhe ſeem'd here, ſhall then far out-ſoar all the celebrated Divines, Rabbins and Philoſophers upon Earth. With unutterable Raviſhments ſhall ſhe immediately contemplate the divine Perfections! be faſhion'd in all her noble and heavenly Powers, to an exact Reſemblance of her bleſſed Creator! and claſp'd in her Redeemer's Arms, ſhall eternally feaſt upon the Joys of beatifick Viſion. His *Body* ſhall remain the tender Charge of an Almighty Providence; and watchfully ſhall his Duſt be kept, to ſhine in an happy and glori-

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ous Reſurrection! When, being rais'd impaſſible and immortal, gladden'd and inſpir'd with unſpeakable Joy and heavenly Vigour, grac'd with an eternal Bloom of Youth, and moſt exquiſite Beauty, and clad all anew with ſpiritual and celeſtial Glory, ſhall with Wonder and Rapture, re-unite, re-embrace its glorified Soul! and ſo enter upon that bliſsful Eternity, which ſhall be ſpent in the moſt delightful Diſcoveries and Admirations of Divine Love! and in the Fruition of all that Glory, Felicity and Joy, thoſe ineffable, incomprehenſible Entertainments, which will be the ultimate Reſult of Creating and Redeeming Goodneſs!

And if this be the Portion of the meaneſt and moſt neglected Chriſtian, (and it belongs to him, whether he apprehends it or not) and ſuch the final and glorious Iſſue of all his Conflicts and Trials in this Military State, 'tis meet, ſure, to be ſaid to a Redeemer, 'tis but juſt and equal to confeſs to him, "That his Yoke is eaſy, "and his Burden is light. His Ways are Pleaſantneſs, "and his Paths Peace; leading to Bleſſedneſs both in "this Life, and that which is to come! Happy are the "Tendencies of true Religion! Admirable its preſent "Supports and Refreſhings! its future Hopes are inex-"plicably raviſhing, and glorious are its eternal Re-"wards!

Friday,

N° 57. *Monday, Auguſt* 1. 1715.

Eternity, thou pleaſing dreadful Thought!
Addiſon's Cato.

AS nothing is more refreſhing and delightful to the Reaſonable Soul, or tends more to elevate, enlarge, and ſatisfy its noble Faculties, than the Views of boundleſs Eternity, and the ſtedfaſt Apprehenſion of its future, everlaſting Exiſtence; ſo 'tis admirable to conſider the Influence of this heavenly Proſpect, in giving it the Aſcendant over all the Charms of a ſenſible World, and the moſt exquiſite Trials and Calamities of Life. When the Heaven-born Soul ſtretches her Immortal Powers, and, under the Conduct of a divine and heavenly Guide, ſoars away, and viſits the inviſible Creation! When ſhe riſes upon the Wings of Faith and Hope, above the cloudy Regions of this World, gets beyond the ſtarry Sphere, and breathes the pure native Air of Celeſtial Paradiſe! When ſhe bathes her Thoughts in the Meditation of the Life to come, and conſiders the Diſſolution of her Body, but as introducing the Perfection of her Being, and the compleat Felicity and Contentment of her Intellectual Capacities! when ſhe ſees her ſelf paſſing to an Immortal State, and all Things combining to ripen her for that glorious Change, which terminates every Evil, and iſſues in a Scene of inviolable Bliſs, ſwift as the Revolutions of Time! When ſhe ſurveys her heavenly Make and Conſtitution, the Graſp of her everlaſting Mind, and the noble Compaſs of divine Enjoyment, ſhe ſhall tread and traverſe to Eternity! How does ſhe out-ſoar the Miſeries of the preſent World, and taſte the Pleaſures of an happy Immorta-

lity! When she thinks on the Time that she shall dislodge from this Tenement of Clay, and on the Wings of Victory, and in the Arms of Cherubs, mount to the Empyrean Heaven. Immediately upon her Entrance, into whose blissful Regions, she shall be welcom'd by an enthron'd Redeemer! emparadis'd in the Bosom of the Deity! Array'd with her Robe, her Crown and her Palm! Seated on a shining Throne! And embrac'd in the Arms of Millions of Celestial Companions! When she remembers she is shortly to be clad with the Capacities of an Angel, to vie with the Services, and share the Entertainment of glorious Seraphims! To stand for ever in the open immediate View of all Divine Perfections! And behold all the Beauty, Magnificence, and Glory, even of that perfect and exalted State, shining with an infinitely superior Excellency in his own blessed Being! When she knows that part of her design'd Felicity, will be to look into and contemplate the Counsels and Decrees of Eternity! To research and survey, with more elevated Understanding, more exquisite Delight, the wondrous Volumes of Nature, Providence and Grace! To celebrate the Perfections of her Maker, display'd in erecting this excellent Frame of the Universe! disposing all its Scenes, Apartments and Furniture, in such beautiful Variety, Usefulness and harmonious Order! To adore the Power of his Almighty Arm, and the Depth of his infinite Understanding, in sustaining and governing the mighty Fabrick he had rear'd! Over-ruling the darkest and most inexplicable Events, all the seeming Contrarieties, mysterious Conduct, and trackless Paths of Providence, to subserve the wisest and the greatest Purposes! and managing the wide Compass of Nature, Animate, Inanimate, Human and Angelick Being, to accomplish that admirable, that exquisite System, form'd in his eternal Mind! But, above all, to sing the Wonders and the Mysteries, the infinite, unutterable Endearments, of Incarnate Deity and Redeeming Love! That the glorious Jesus, essentially Divine, possessing the Honours of the Deity! attended by Myriads of Angels, Arch-Angels, and flaming Cherubims! adorn'd by all the heavenly

heavenly Powers, enthron'd with equal Splendor and Majeſty with his eternal Father! ſhould quit that incomprehenſible Glory, and veil his Godhead in an infinitely inferior Nature! ſubmit to the inconveniences (aſtoniſhing Condeſcention! ſtupendous Love!) of Hunger, Wearineſs, Pain, Poverty, and vileſt Diſgrace! to be treated with the utmoſt Contempt by Creatures of his own forming! endure the Reproaches, the ungrateful Reproaches of miſcreant Man; the Inſults of damned Angels, and the Wrath of his Almighty Father! to be cradled in a Manger, and die upon a Croſs! and all to regain the Happineſs and Bliſs of deſpicable rebellious Worms, void of all Affection towards him! while the Soul is looking at theſe eternal Proſpects, and mindful of her heavenly Deſcent, with the Wings of Faith hovers on that glorious World! Is it any Wonder, on the one Hand, that ſhe ſpurns the Diadem of *Cæſar*, and tramples upon all the Splendors of his Throne; contemns the Pomp, the Glory, and the Grandeur that glitters in the Courts of Princes; the moſt delicate Satisfactions, and refin'd Contentments of this ſublunary World! neglects the Pleaſures, and diſdains the Joys, that are ſo much beneath the Dignity of her Birth, and the vaſtneſs of her immortal Hopes? riſes with loftier and ſupernal Flight, above theſe fond and fluttering Amuſements, ſo unequal to its noble Breathings, heavenly Tendency, and everlaſting Frame! 'tis through this Intercourſe ſhe maintains with the Inviſible World, a familiar Converſe with a vaſt and endleſs Futurity, that ſhe looks upon thoſe Things that have the higheſt Value put upon them by the World, ador'd among Men, and purſu'd with the eagereſt Ambition, with a noble and ſincere Indifference! pompous Titles, Poſts of Honour, high Revenues, flaming Chariots and ſplendid Equipage! ſtately Buildings and delicious Gardens, purling Streams and ſhady Groves! the Charms of Beauty, and the Strains of Wit, and all the endearing, ſoft, enchanting Scenes in Nature; yea, the Wiſdom of Philoſophy and the Depths of State, the Victories of Alexander, and the Pleaſure of ten Thouſand Paradices,

dices, are as nothing to the Joy, the Glory and the Bliſs, ſhe knows is prepar'd and reſerv'd for her in the heavenly World! And on the other Hand, what though for the preſent ſhe may be held upon the Confines of Darkneſs, and cover'd with the very Shades of Death! converſe with nothing but Storms and Tempeſts, Terror and Anguiſh, Tears and Groans! Fed continually with the Bread of Affliction, and the Wine of Aſtoniſhment! Suſtain the mighty and inceſſant Shocks of inviſible Powers, and perhaps many uneaſy Self-reflections, the Proofs of her Imperfection, and incident to her unglorified State. Should Friend, Lover and Companion fail her; the Boſom intimate, the tender Relative, ſtanding at a ſhy, a wounding Diſtance. If ſhe is afflicted in her Body, blaſted in her Reputation, and leſſen'd in the World; diſcarded the very Society of Mankind; and thrown out of their Thoughts as an Object of Scorn and Indignation; yet how doth ſhe triumph with the Joy of Victory, when ſhe can look through all this horrid Gloom, to thoſe pleaſant and immortal Regions, where her preſent Tribulations, will but raiſe her eternal Hallelujahs! how juſtly does ſhe ſmile with ſuperior Greatneſs, when conſcious to her Innocence, ſhe is arraign'd as Criminal at their Bar, who themſelves muſt ſhortly be cited before a more juſt Tribunal; knows they muſt make their Appearance with her, before that aweful Throne, and ſtript of all Diſtinction, on the level Plain, wait their everlaſting Doom. With what inward Exultations, Celeſtial Rapture, and victorious Triumph, does ſhe look upon all the Inſults and Indignities that ſhe receives from Fellow Mortals, the moſt ſtinging Reproaches, Calumnies and opprobrious Diſtractions, while ſhe ſees the dear Day always at Hand, when ſhe ſhall be brought forth to the View of the whole Species of Angels and Men; and in the Preſence of that vaſt and united Confluence of all intellectual Creatures, be openly acquitted and embrac'd, by this one great, univerſal, ſupream Being! and in publick Triumph, led up by her Divine Creator, to a fair Manſion of immortal Joy, faſhion'd by an infinite Architect, and pav'd with everlaſting Love!

Only

Only it muſt be remembred, that the Conſideration of Eternity, and the Thought of a future Exiſtence, can yield none of theſe Divine Refreſhments and Supports to the Mind of Man, in its Natural Apoſtate State. Nor can the utmoſt Soar of meer Moral, Philoſophical Virtue, ever tower this heavenly Height, to raiſe the Soul to ſuch joyful and glorious Views! There muſt be ſomething of a more noble and divine Extract, to produce this Fruit, this Flower of Paradiſe. 'Tis neceſſary there ſhould be a great and univerſal Change, introduc'd upon all the Powers of the Soul, by Sovereign and Almighty Grace, to enable her to triumph in the Face of Eternity! Wit out which, the thought of an Hereafter, will be the moſt uneaſy and dreadful Companion, to a juſtly apprehenſive, intelligent and immortal Being.

A Contemplative Survey OF THE CREATION.

—— Wonderful indeed are all his Works,
Pleasant to know, and worthiest to be all
Had in Remembrance, always with Delight:
But what created Mind can comprehend
Their Numbers, or the Wisdom infinite,
That brought them forth, but hid their Causes deep!

Milton's Paradise Lost.

TAking the fresh Air one Summers Evening, and beholding the admirable Impressions of Divine Beauty, Goodness, Power and Wisdom, stampt upon universal *Nature*, such Thoughts and Reflections as these, rose immediately in my Mind.

What thinking, intellectual Being can walk Abroad, and be sorrounded on all sides with such

ſuch beautiful divine Works, and ſuch a Variety of Creatures, and not lift up his Heart in Praiſe, and Love, and Adoration to his glorious *Creator*, in whom all thoſe Beauties are eminently and infinitely conſpicuous, and from whom they ſpring? All the ſparkling Glories and and Excellencies of the Creature, are but a Drop from that Ocean, a Ray from that Sun, a little Grain from that infinite unſearchable Mine of Perfection and Beauty! When I conſider the *Earth*, as it is variouſly clad in the ſeveral Seaſons of the Year; when I view it in all its vernal Pomp and Gaiety; behold the Ground, as a ſtately Carpet, or curious Piece of Tapeſtry, embroider'd and emboſs'd with a beautiful Mixture of delightful Flowers, diffuſing an Ambroſial Fragrance! When I think upon the infinite Variety of Plants and Trees, from the *Hyſſop* to the *Cedar*, and obſerve every Leaf, and Fruit, and Shape, to be diſtinct and proper to its Kind, purſuant to the Order which they received in the firſt Creation! When I ſee the various Proportions and Colours of Birds, and hear their warbling Lays, and tuneful harmonious Ditties, ſounding through the Woods: When I am charm'd with a Train of melodious Notes, flowing from a Creature that's void of *Reaſon*, and inſenſible of the Author of its Being: When I ſee the freſh and lively Verdure of Meadows and Encloſures, the delightful and ſhading Variety of Greens that cover and adorn the Ground, the Buſh, and the Tree; when I conſider the lovely and delicate Hue of the *Lilly* and the *Roſe*, the delicious Flavour of the *Violet*, and thoſe endleſs Beauties which ſhine amidſt the Groves and Gardens, what Wonder doth it breed, what Rapture in my admiring Soul! If I view it in its Summer's Pride and Glory, when the Face of the Earth is crown'd with the Goodneſs of the Lord, and the Fatneſs of his Paths; when Millions of Fields ſtand crowded with the nobleſt Grain, and raviſh the Heart of Man with the amazing Bounty of his Maker, and the Proſpect of a glorious Harveſt! If I conſider its Autumnal Magazines, and thoſe plentiful Stores of all Variety of Fruits, which it then freely unlades and pours into the Boſom of Man: Or when I take a Proſpect of its wintry Scenes, and ſeriouſly contemplate the *Snow*, the *Hail*, the *Wind*, the *Ice*,

Ice, the *Cold*, the *Rain*, and consider the Solemnity and various Usefulness of those mighty Works, 'tis all big with awful and pleasing Wonder, Astonishment and Surprize! When I consider every Spire of Grass, as the Work of a *Deity*, and that all the Angels in Heaven have not Power enough to call into Existence the meanest *Fly*; when I think how the curious and excellent Artifice that is in the Structure of the smallest Animal, had poz'd the Heads, and reproach'd the Understanding of the greatest Naturalists; and that vain Man would be grasping the infinite Mysteries of Redemption with corrupted Reason, which is baffled and outsoar'd by the most minute and inconsiderable Parts of the visible Creation: When I call to mind the *Mountains*, the *Rocks*, and the *Valleys*, the roaring *Wildernesses* and *Desarts*, the *Woods* and the beautiful *Plains*, the *Seas*, the *Rivers*, and the *Fountains* of *Water*; when I consider what swarms of living Animals inhabit almost each Foot of Earth I tread upon; what Millions of Sheep and Oxen and other Cattle, are grazing upon Hills and Pastures, ranging the Forrest, or attending the Service of Mankind; what prodigious Numbers and Variety of Fowl enrich, inhabit, and adorn the *Air*, the *Water* and the *Earth*, and what Worlds of useful and admirable Creatures dwell in the Bosom of the *Ocean*, I adore the infinite Grandeur, Magnificence and Power of my great *Creator*, and think, how little a Portion have I seen of him! But when I further consider, that the Ocean and the Earth, which compose this vast Globe I stand on, and all yon glittering Glories of the Sky were form'd out of Nothing, at the mere sovereign, all-powerful Word of their Creator and mine; and that this prodigious and amazing Mass of Being, stands immovable in the yielding Air, without the least visible Prop or Pillar to support it: When I consider the *Sun*, that glorious Creature, above an Hundred and sixty times bigger than this World I dwell upon; that runs its Annual and Diurnal Course, with such incredible Swiftness, and yet with such punctual Regularity: When I contemplate the beautiful Body of the *Moon*, behold it walking in its Brightness, and its radiant Countenance, softened into a more mild and amiable Light; When I view the various Beauty and Glory of the

the *Stars*, when I consider their immeasurable Height, prodigious Magnitude, and numberless Numbers; when I reflect that these mighty Globes of Fire have hung in a thin yielding *Æther*, near six Thousand Years, without the least Disorder or Confusion, in Obedience to the great and sovereign Command of him that made them! When I observe an infinite Wisdom and Goodness, in placing those luminous Orbs at so exact a Distance as to shed their proper Influences on Earth, whereas should they be heightned or lower'd into other Spheres, the World would either freize to Ice, or kindle into a Flame: When I survey that vast and immeasurable Expanse and Canopy of Heaven, that lovely and beautiful *Sky*, in which those glorious Luminaries are fix'd! when I consider again, that all that I recount and behold, was made for the Service and Accommodation of ungrateful Man, a contemptible, rebellious Worm; that it was all but the Work of Six Days! And that there are far more glorious and magnificent Works, accomplish'd in the invisible World, which no Mortal can behold and live, I am lost in Wonder and Amazement! I stand ravish'd in Extasy of Thought, at the stupendous Displays of my Creator's Power, Goodness, Wisdom and Beauty! With Raptures of Admiration and Ravishment of Spirit, though I can take in so very little of that glorious Beauty and admirable Skill, which lie hid in every Part of the Creation, I cry, "Are these the Creatures, the Work and Work-"manship of our *Divine Creator*? Has he stampt such "Impressions of his Excellency on these visible Ob-"jects, and left such Tracts and Footsteps of his Perfec-"tions behind him upon perishable Beings, to be "trac'd and ador'd by his Reasonable Creatures? How "great is his Goodness! How great is his Beau-"ty! how lovely doth he appear, even in the "Works of his Hands, and in the Furniture of "*Nature*! how infinitely fair and beautiful must "he be, that has imprinted such lovely Characters on "his Creatures! how Boundless must be that Power "that upholds and sustains this immense *Theatre* of the "Universe! how infinite and incomprehensible that "Wisdom, which governs with so much Order and

"Har-

" Harmony, ſo vaſt a Number, and ſuch an endleſs " Variety of Beings! Who can ſee a *Bird*, or *Beaſt*, or " *Plant*, much leſs a *Star*, a *Sun*, and not cry out a " DEITY! Ador'd then, for ever ador'd be the " infinite *Jehovah*, for thoſe Skirts of Majeſty, thoſe " Dawns of Glory, thoſe glimmering Views of Divine " Perfection, which are to be ſeen and admir'd in Crea- " tion! But how infinitely tranſcendent it is, how ſu- " perlatively raviſhing to reflect, that when we con- " template the moſt beautiful Appearance here below, " the moſt charming of Created Beings, there's incon- " ceivably more Goodneſs, Excellency and Sweetneſs " in his bleſſed incomprehenſible ſelf, for the abſolute, " everlaſting Satisfaction of an immortal Spirit! when " all the Glory of this World, and its moſt beautiful " and agreeable Objects, ſhall be reduc'd to their firſt " Nothing, and buried in eternal Oblivion, he will be " always new and deſireable to the Soul, a perpetual " Fountain of freſh and overflowing Delight! the ſhal- " low Streams of Created Good, do but mock the Ex- " pectation, and encreaſe the Thirſt of a Reaſonable " Creature; but in GOD there is a boundleſs Ocean of " Goodneſs, to quench the moſt enlarg'd Deſires, and " hath all the Faculties of an immortal Mind, with " everlaſting Contentment! With what ſacred Tri- " umph, with what Raptures of Joy, ſhould we freely " part with all the World, all Creatures in our Eſteem " and Affection for his Divine Embraces! Were one " intereſted in all the Endearments and Perfections " which they ſeverally poſſeſs, could he call them by " the moſt intimate and appropriating Title, his, yet " they were all but as the Drop of the Bucket, as the " inconſiderable Duſt of the Balance, to this glorious, " all-comprehending Good. All that Lovelineſs and " Sweetneſs that can poſſibly reſide in Created Being, " is deriv'd from him, and dwells in his ador'd Self, in " its Fountain Fulneſs. There it is, and only there, " that the Soul can meet with all that it can poſſibly " either enjoy or deſire; where each Faculty ſhall " meet with its full and proper Entertainment, and all " its Powers be at reſt. When theſe viſible *Heavens* " being folded up, ſhe ſhall contemplate, enjoy and

" adore

" adore her glorious *Creator*, in the Brightneſs of *Beatifick Viſion*, in that Heaven above, that ſhall never be darkned nor diſſolv'd! But then, how neceſſarily unhappy muſt they be, thoſe reaſonable, everlaſting Creatures, who have no Intereſt, no Share in this Fountain of Perfection, and Spring of all Bleſſedneſs! Who never yet enjoy'd one Smile from that Being that faſhion'd their Minds, and form'd all the Powers of their Souls, and imparted to them a Nature that can never be happy in any thing but his eternal Self. But have all the Perfections of this infinite Supream, who is the greateſt and the beſt of Beings, threatning their eternal Ruin, and arm'd with Vengeance and Diſpleaſure againſt them. Unhappy Creatures! who not only are diſintereſted in the Love and Lovelineſs of the faireſt Object, the higheſt and moſt excellent Good, but lie expos'd to all thoſe Miſeries and Woes which can be inflicted throughout an endleſs Eternity, by a Being of ſuch aweful and aſtoniſhing Power, ſuch infinite Purity, ſuch incomprehenſible *Majeſty* and *Glory!*

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